



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**Minutes**  
**April 10, 2018**

**Commission Present:** Bossange, Hurley, Pierce, Healy, Kaplan and Montroll

**Staff Present:** Wight, Cahill, Cotton, Rogers and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:31 p.m. by Commission Chair Kaplan

**Approval of Agenda**

Kaplan amended the agenda by adding Discussion Item #IVA City Hall Park, motion to approve the agenda as amended by Bossange, second by Hurley, motion carried.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Hurley read aloud with the motion included, motion made to approve the consent agenda by Pierce, second by Bossange, motion carried.

**Award Presentation for Volunteer of the Year**

Wight stated that she and Cahill would like to announce the recipient of the award and introduced herself to Wendy Coe, thanked her for all her hard work.

Cahill state when he nominated Coe it seemed wrong to nominate for just one year since she had been volunteering for 20 years. Expressed all of Coe's guidance and that she has served on the Advisory Board for many years as well. Benefit from her organization and leadership skills. Felt very deserving of the award and gave a plaque and certificate to Gardeners Supply for appreciation.

Kaplan thanked on behalf of the Commission and asked Coe if she would like to add anything. Coe stated very happy working with gardeners, enjoys and hopes to do for many years to come.

**Award Presentation for Coach of the Year**

Cotton stated this award had not given for two years and would be presenting for both years. 2016 award for Coach of the Year went to Matt Moore and the 2017 award went to Patrick Kinner. Cotton expressed how pleased the department was to have them serve the programs and explained the qualities that she appreciated about both of them, to name a few; compassion, sportsmanship, and many other attributes. Appreciated them going above and beyond as coaches. Explained the sports they coached are fall soccer and youth basketball in the old north end.

Both Moore and Kinner thanked Rogers and Cotton for all they do behind the scenes and feel very supported by the staff to do their job.

**Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00 PM, 3 min. per person time limit)**

Public forum opened at 6:00 p.m. by Commission Chair Kaplan.  
Nobody came forward to speak at Public Forum.

Public forum closed at 6:01 p.m.



#### **IVa. City Hall Park Discussion**

Kaplan stated it had come to her attention that there is a resolution circulating from the City Council regarding City Hall Park redesign, which is intended to stop the renovations and have more discussion. Explained part of the resolution speaks about having a standing committee and explained discussion has been happening publicly on this project since 2011, has been on Commission agenda at least 3 times a year. Feels that much of the rhetoric calls into question the professionalism of the department, arborist, and landscape planners/professionals. Kaplan stated she would be going to the City Council meeting on Monday to speak to this issue. Encouraged others to reach out to City Council if they desire or have specific concerns or questions.

Wight explained some of what the resolution speaks to and how personally she felt it undermines the process particularly at such a late time in the plans.

Bossange stated that he would like to see the proposed resolution before the City Council meeting. Wight stated that she would share the proposal with Kaplan and the Commissioners.

#### **Childcare Licensing**

Rogers said the State of Vermont approached the School Department and is requiring them to hold their own license separate from BPRW. Years ago it was agreed upon that the City and the Schools would run the Afterschool program collaboratively and the City (which currently held the State license) would hold the license. After 9 years, the State feels the City and Schools are not abiding by licensing protocol and have approximately 2 weeks to comply. The state is asking for both BPRW and the School to hold a separate license. This would affect the STARS program greatly, since the number of "STARS" decides how much State funds are allocated. The current license is at five STARS, which is the max, causing the State to pay a large part of subsidized individual registrations.

Moving forward from the collaboration BPRW staff have been pulling out of the program gradually, the trade-off was receiving some funding for administrative support, with this total separation the department will see a reduction in funds. Staff are putting all paperwork together to create the STARS system starting over and are doubtful that they would get more than a three STARS rating. Will not qualify for more, the question is where to go or how to move forward. Does the department want to run two licensed programs at a loss to BPRW of \$5-\$20,000 a year and figure out how to allocate resources to cover the program. Prior to Burlington Kids Program BPRW ran both afterschool and camp programs independently and questioned if it would be best to move away from the childcare all together, and how to move forward. Have a 90 grace period for the summer to cover summer programs.

Bossange asked what the pros and cons of keeping and giving up the program would be and Wight stated it would be easier for the Schools to take on, second option is looking to the YMCA to take on the part that BPRW is currently doing, feel like still doing a great job servicing families without this piece.

Kaplan asked if rent was paid to BPRW and was told no, the programs are run through the Schools no exchange of rent. Rogers does not want to see programming more complicated for parents.



Wight introduced Brendan Kaplan, new intern with the department, from Chicago, Illinois. He is attending Western Washington University, in Bellingham, WA.

### **Discussion on Dual Membership**

Attorney St. James could not make the meeting and will speak to this at the May Commission meeting.

### **Conservation Legacy Program Grant Funds Request, 3090 North Avenue Extension**

Nick Warner, WVPD introduced himself and Chris Boget, from the Lake Champlain Land Trust and how they were working together on the purchase of this property. The Winooski Valley Park District would own the property and the Lake Champlain Land Trust would hold the conservation easement. Other partners for the parcel of land are the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Conservation Board and Parks, Recreation and Waterfront. Explained many people are unaware of this piece of property, had been run as a family marina, currently have sales and purchase agreement, done assessment, title search, spoke with Planning & Zoning for expectations for the site. Trying to close on the property in September. Two sources of funding, VT Housing Conservation Board and Conservation Legacy, who voted unanimously to support.

Winooski Valley Park District (WVPD) would own and would leave the marina open for a co-op if it was desired. Would have a conservation easement, no buildings on site, ramp would be present, would function well for canoe and kayak loading and unloading. Felt taking building out made sense since they all flooded.

Pierce asked if the property would have shelters or picnic areas and told no, it is a flood plain.

Healy asked how many boaters are currently using the area, told about 20 or so and this is the last year then none, unless it was the desire to have a very small co-op.

Kaplan was familiar with this piece of land and on occasion the road is bad, asked who took care of that, told WVPD would be and doing its best to keep it usable, tough area and has potential for flood lands.

Cahill stated amazing project and an appropriate use of conservation funds, increases City's conservation efforts. Warner stated all parks are free and open to the public.

Motion to approve the request for \$165,000 from Conservation Legacy Program funds for acquisition of land located at 3090 North Avenue Extension by Bossange, second by Pierce, motion carried.

### **Conservation Legacy Program Grant Funds Request, 20 Rock Point Road**

Chris Boget, Lake Champlain Land Trust explained he had come to the Commission quite some time ago for an easement and last month for request for funds for Rock Point property and this is the third section of the property all owned by the diocese. Purchase of this property would allow permanent access, trails would be improved in some areas, some erosion issues, would like to do handicap accessible, all three projects that have been brought would be working on together, tried to simplify, felt the nicest ecological spot in the state. Would like to make signage and trails welcoming and making sure safe and going in correct areas. Very well thought out plan as to getting a good design done well.



Healy asked where railings would be, told where ever cliff type areas are, to keep safe view in an appropriate spot and location with a sturdy structure.

Cahill stated this was the most important project the City will see and the value and importance is the most he has worked on. The Conservation Board is in full favor of this acquisition.

Looking to raise private fundraising dollars and would like to have closed up in the fall. Trail work is already starting as things dry out. Two years expected to work on the trails.

Motion by Pierce to approve application for funds by the Conservation Legacy Program for \$222,000 by Pierce, second by Healy, motion carried with Bossange recusing himself from the vote.

Cahill explained that currently the Conservation Legacy Program fund is at \$695,000 in bank today, after considering encumbrances have a little over \$200,000, few projects on the horizon which will bring to \$160,000, some other liabilities to take care of in the next 6 months which will bring to \$30-\$40K, received three quarters of this year's payments. The fund receives approximately \$139,000 year.

Developing a baseline of what it takes to bring a property up to standard that is usable. There is the potential for increased need in how the conservation funds are operated; investigating what it would take to get conservation tax as a charter change item from fixed to a tax based that would grow as taxes grow.

Kaplan explained that not just a onetime cost but there is always the maintenance in future years and is very mindful.

Bossange praised Cahill for hard work and using the funds to acquire land that is of good use for public use and access for all. Feels like the stewardship will be the easier portion after getting to a good standard.

Kaplan asked Cahill to set an appropriate date to do a walk before the Commission meeting and then conduct the Commission meeting at the church. Cahill felt land would be appropriate in May/June.

#### **Update on Parks Foundation (Standing Item)**

Bossange said raising more privately to fund the Rock Point properties. Event coming up to raise more monies to make easier to acquire and take care of property.

#### **Update on Memorial Auditorium**

Wight stated Noelle MacKay, Director, CEDO was not available to come to this meeting, would attend the May meeting.

#### **Director's Items**

Wight stated that Audubon has won a grant and is partnering with the City. Cahill stated that Audubon reached out to planning team and came up with proposal that gave \$10,000 toward, planters on boardwalk, interpretive signs, planting trees and shrubs at Oakledge, May 12 is the planting day, also international migratory bird day, doing two hour shifts, everything is happening on this day. Planting 100 trees at 311 North Avenue.



Kaplan asked Montroll to get some volunteers from BHS to volunteer with the Audubon for the tree planting and suggested they could use for their community service project school requirement.

Spoke about new signage coming, going to NPA in April and May to give general updates and will speak about the ash borer as well.

#### **Commissioner's Items**

Bossange asked if no smoking signs would be going up, told yes by Wight, he liked the no smoking in beaches on signs and asked about no smoking in City Hall park, would like to see the signs back in that park, Wight stated that BCA said the signs would not be going back in City Hall Park. Suggested other types of signage not necessarily banners.

Healy asked about schedule for May and June Commission meeting, dates are May 1 and June 5<sup>th</sup>. Kaplan stated gone in August. Healy gone in September, May and June, suggested doing a meeting in July and not August.

July 17th, tentative meeting date, no meeting in August.

Kaplan reminded the commission that the Director's evaluation is due in June.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. by Pierce, second by Healy, motion carried.